

**Public Comment Responses Received During the WPS BOE Meeting on
12/21/2020**

Below is the public record of public comment responses received during the 12/21/2020 BOE meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - Comments are posted exactly as they have been received.

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Non-Agenda Items.
Amie Peck	3 Sugar Maple Lane	<p>I wanted to take the opportunity to thank all the teachers, support staff, nurses, custodians and leadership teams at BMS and CMS. This week marks our last week together as one school. The last 2.5 years have been challenging. Teachers were asked to leave the comfort of their classrooms and offices to share classrooms and office space. The simple task of returning a parent call became next to impossible. Crowded hallways, stressed parents and students ripped from routine became the norm for teachers. When we thought everyone reached their breaking point, Covid-19 hit. When most professions had the ability to work safely from home our teachers rose to occasion and showed up at school everyday.</p> <p>We spend a lot of time talking about instructional minutes and checking in to make sure the students are ok but I'm here to take the opportunity, to stand up, or really type in a google form, to thank our teachers and principals. Thank you for showing up. Thank you for taking time away from your family at night and on the weekends to call back a frantic parent or to check in with that student you were worried about. Thank you for coming into a building in September with a mask on when we know you were scared. Thank you for giving our kids a little bit of normalcy in the most abnormal time.</p> <p>This morning I overheard one of my daughters teachers at Staples wrapping up her class. She ended the class wishing everyone a Happy Holiday and safe break. She then told the kids that she was there for each of them, even over break. If they felt alone, sad or needed to talk to someone for them to call her. These are our teachers and we should be proud and celebrate them. From Stepping Stones to Staples High</p>

	School. Thank you!
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DISCUSSION

- 1. Coleytown Middle School Update** - Comments are posted exactly as they have been received.

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Coleytown Middle School Update.
		<p>As one of the original people at the epicenter of the CMS debacle, I cannot thank the CMSBC enough for their wonderful attention to detail and the thoughtfulness with which they repaired our school. They have made a safe place for our children and there is no amount of thanks enough for that.</p> <p>Moving forward, I certainly hope we have learned a valuable lesson here so that no other school in our district gets to the point of CMS. We have the Tools for Schools program for a reason. Once those reports are submitted who receives them and reviews them? Who determines what gets fixed or what might be a long term problem?</p> <p>I am just glad someone finally listened and fixed the problem at CMS. That said, I would like to propose a more robust and transparent review of the Tools for Schools submissions in an effort to avoid having any other school in our district to suffer the same fate as CMS.</p>
Sue Herrmann	5 Spring Hill Rd	Thank you.

- 2. Health Update** - No public comments were received on this item.
- 3. Teaching and Learning Update** - Comments are posted exactly as they have been received.
 - State Required High School Course Addition: African-American, Black, Latino, and Puerto Rican Course of Studies
 - Student Engagement
 - Current Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Efforts

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Teaching and Learning Update.

Harold Bailey	15 Regents Park	<p>Harold Bailey, 15 Regents Park, Westport CT...Chair, TEAM Westport</p> <p>TEAM Westport fully endorses the DEI focused curricular initiatives currently underway as well as the Superintendent's plans for a longer term Equity Study and DEI Strategic Planning.</p> <p>In particular, we applaud the work by Lauren Francese and others which represents years of foundational work that preceded the state mandate. Her proposal should be fully supported by the Board and State. Clearly, Staples students understand that this is a course which will be beneficial to ALL students.</p> <p>We also look forward to continuing our work with the administration to ensure that, interim to the completion of the district's Strategic DEI Plan, we utilize the principles of antiracism to make the environments in all buildings increasingly respectful, welcoming, and productive for all students.</p> <p>Sincerely, Harold Bailey</p>
Ngassam Ngnoumen	17 Adams Farm Rd, Westport	<p>As a member of our WPS PTA DEI Committee, we appreciate the collective efforts within our district to help prepare students who are well positioned to thrive and lead in a diverse workforce and multicultural world they will meet.</p>
Ngassam Ngnoumen	17 Adams Farm Rd, Westport	<p>Thanks for sharing the current structure regarding addressing bias, racism or bullying. Given how invisible these acts may be sometimes, it would be helpful for the district to also evaluate if students feel comfortable using the current structure and are there opportunities for improvement so students feel comfortable reaching out without feeling ostracized.</p>
Harold Bailey	15 Regents Park Westport	<p>While students need the kind of training mentioned by Principal Thomas, so do our Administrators, Teachers and Paraprofessionals. The system needs more than the traditional informal "business as usual". Transforming culture to eliminate these kinds of disparities requires a much more focused approach as soon as possible.</p>
Harold Bailey	15 Regents Park, Westport, CT	<p>Racism is very different from bullying. Bullying is always intentional. Racism is usually most damaging and prevalent when it is unintended to be so. We owe it to those being damaged and those unintentionally doing the damage to address this dynamic as expeditiously as possible.</p>

4. Special Education Programming - No public comments were received on this item.

5. 2021-2022 Budget Overview - No public comments were received on this item.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. **Second Reading of the Following Policies:** - No public comments were received on this item.
 - 1331, "Smoke Free Environment" (Revision)
 - 5141.4, "Child Sex Abuse and Assault Response Policy and Reporting" (New)